

Remarks

Claims 1-30 are in the application, of which claims 1, 11, and 23 are in independent form. Claims 22, 23, 25, 27, 29, and 30 are amended herein.

Claims 22, 23, 25, 27, 29, and 30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, with claims 27 and 29 otherwise indicated as including allowable subject matter; claims 1-5, 11-15, and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b); claims 22-25, and 30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a); and claims 6-10, 16-20, 26 and 28 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but are otherwise indicated as including allowable subject matter.

Applicant thanks the examiner for her careful attention to the claim language, including her identification of several informalities corrected by this amendment. Applicant also thanks the examiner for her indication that claims 6-10, 16-20, and 26-29 include allowable subject matter.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

In the January 12, 2005 Office action, claims 22, 23, 25, 27, 29, and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The examiner states that claims 22 and 23 lack antecedent basis for “the unused portion” and “the opening not intersected by the cable path,” and claims 25, 27, 29 and 30 lack antecedent basis for “the strain relieving neck member.” Claims 22 and 23 are amended to provide antecedent basis for “the unused portion of the opening” and to delete the phrase “not intersected by the cable path.” Claims 25, 27, 29, and 30 are amended to change the terms “strain relieving neck member” and “the strain relief member” to “strain relieving member”, to thereby correct inadvertent drafting errors. Claim 25 is further amended to depend from claim 24 rather than claim 23, to thereby correct another inadvertent drafting error and provide antecedent basis for “the flange walls” recited in claim 25.

These amendments clarify the claims without narrowing their intended scope.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1-5, 11-15, and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,385,484 of Bartle et al. (“Bartle”). With reference to Fig. 9 of Bartle, the examiner states that Bartle teaches the device of claims 1-5, 11-15, and 21. Applicant respectfully traverses and requests reconsideration.

With respect to claims 1 and 11, applicant respectfully contends that Bartle does not disclose all of the claim limitations. Claim 1 recites a housing for an electrical connector comprising a strain relief member “selectively mountable to the mounting

flange of the main section in one of a plurality of discrete, angularly offset positions." (emphasis added). Likewise, claim 11 recites an electrical connector assembly comprising a strain relief member "selectively mountable to the mounting flange of the main housing in one of a plurality of predetermined angularly offset positions." (emphasis added). In contradistinction, Fig. 9 of Bartle discloses a cable cover that is not selectively mountable or capable of a plurality of angularly offset positions. In fact, with reference to Fig. 9, Bartle expressly states at column 2, lines 5-10, that the construction of the of the cable cover "is limited to an L-shaped bend in one direction only and several types must be made depending on which direction a cable is to bend." Moreover, if the cable cover of Fig. 9 were rotated 180° relative to the plug body, as the examiner suggests, the grooves (10) located on the lower casing (2) of the cable cover would no longer be positioned to receive projections (9); and there is no indication that the upper casing (1) includes similar grooves to accommodate the projections. Thus, it appears the cable cover of Fig. 9 would be inoperable if an attempt were made to reorient it 180°, as suggested by the examiner. Accordingly, applicant submits that Bartle does not anticipate claims 1 and 11.

Because Bartle does not teach the device of either claim 1 or claim 11, applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 1 and 11 be withdrawn. Because claims 2-5, 12-15, and 21 all depend from either claim 1 or claim 11, directly or indirectly, as well as including additional limitations, applicant also respectfully requests that the rejections of claims 2-5, 12-15, and 21 be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 22-25, and 30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bartle in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,653,832 of Sanchez. The examiner states that Bartle teaches the assembly substantially as claimed but does not teach a cover section, and that Sanchez teaches such cover sections used to improve a strain relief. Applicant respectfully traverses the examiner's rejection of claims 22-25, and 30 and requests reconsideration.

Claim 22 depends from claim 11. Applicants rely on the arguments presented above with respect to claim 11 to support patentability of claim 22 and request that the rejection be withdrawn.

With respect to claim 23, applicant respectfully contends that Bartle does not disclose all of the claim limitations. Like claims 1 and 11, claim 23 also recites an electrical connector assembly comprising a strain relief member that is "selectively mounted to the main housing in one of a plurality of predetermined angularly offset

positions." (emphasis added). As discussed above, Fig. 9 of Bartle discloses a cable cover that is not selectively mountable or capable of a plurality of offset positions and, therefore, does not teach all of the limitations of claim 23. Sanchez also fails to disclose a strain relief that is selectively mounted to a main housing in one of a plurality of predetermined angularly offset positions each defining a different cable path. Rather, Sanchez teaches a strain relieving cover that provides multiple cable paths from a single mounting position on the connector. Therefore, applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claim 23 be withdrawn. Because claims 24, 25, and 30 all depend from claim 23, directly or indirectly, and include additional limitations, applicant also respectfully requests that the rejections of claims 24, 25, and 30 be withdrawn.

Conclusion

Applicant believes the application is in condition for allowance and respectfully requests the same. Applicant invites the examiner to contact the undersigned by telephone, in the event that the examiner believes there are any issues outstanding.

This Amendment is being filed within the 3-month period for reply to the Office action and no fee should be required. However, in the event that fees are required, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-4455.

Respectfully submitted,

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